

DOES HELL EXIST?





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By

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HELL

So . . . you do not like to believe in Hell?

Neither do I!

And I question, that it has ever been a very popular belief. Anytime, or anywhere, with anyone.

Certainly, I have never met anyone who really enjoyed the idea of Hell . . . for themselves.

But even little children laugh at an ostrich when it sticks its head in the sand, on the supposition that because it cannot see the danger, thereby the danger ceases to exist.

And from what has been said, Hell is an everpresent danger. And not just an ordinary danger to our joy, peace, and present happiness; but an eternal danger—to our immortal souls.

Thus it would seem that this idea of Hell deserves our most serious consideration.

Providing it really exists!

I say providing it really exists, that there really is such a place in the world to come. For some say that Hell is just a form of punishment which comes to us right here and now. That we get our Hell right here on earth.

Again, some say that Hell is just a figment of the imagination. A bogey to scare people into being good. Or something along that idea.

And again, others say that at the time of Christ, men spoke in a highly figurative language. Then, later on, down through the centuries, men took the figures of speech such as: "The fires of Hell," and "the torments of Hell," to mean the real thing.

But all this leads up to the real question: "Is there really such a place as Hell?"

In other words; is it reasonable? What does your common sense tell you about it?

What does your God-given intelligence have to say about Hell?

And here is the answer!

It may not be the answer you expect. Not the answer you may desire. As a matter of fact, it is probably just the opposite.

For your God-given reason, common sense and intelligence tell you: "Yes! In the life to come, there is definitely a place of punishment, eternal punishment, which we call 'Hell.'"

But it seems incredible?

Then consider the facts! Calmly. Quietly. Sanely. Surely it cannot do you any harm. It may do you a great amount of good.

For the facts show that Hell does exist.

If you will just go down into the framework of life for a minute, just be patient for a second, you will see how it all works out.

Just use your God-given reason, intelligence and common sense. Nothing more or less. Although Scripture is useful later on, to clarify and confirm what your reason has already proved.

You want only the straight truth. Undeniable. Indisputable. Unquestionable. The truth without fear or bias.

Then here it is!

THE LAWS OF LIFE!

In this world of ours, we must admit, there are certain laws of life.

First there are the physical laws. For instance, if you throw a rock up into the air, will it stay there? No. Of course not. It will come down. Why? Because it is the law! The law of gravity.

Or again, you go for a ride on the train, a street car or an automobile. Do you have to hang on with all your strength and power? Not at all. You just relax and take your ease. Why? Because of the law of motion. "A moving body communicates its motion to a body accompanying it." It is the law.

Or again, if you place your hand on a red-hot stove you will be burnt. Why? Because fire burns. It is the law! These laws are what we call "the physical laws."

Now in addition to the physical laws, we have human laws. Sometimes called the civil laws. The laws of the State.

For example you may not like a man. So you procure a gun, lie in wait, and shoot him. Immediately you are arrested and placed in jail. It is the law!

Or for instance, for a playful jest you go and set fire to his house. You know the re-

sult. Why? It is the law! Leave a man's property alone.

So far for the physical laws, and the civil law.

But in this world of ours, there is another law. It is the most important of all laws. Sometimes it is called, "the moral law." Or it is sometimes called the law of God. Sometimes called the law of conscience. But it does exist. A law more sure than the physical laws. And more certain than the civil law.

And what is this law. It is the law of the Ten Commandments. So-called because of the tabulation which Moses, at the direction of God, drew up and wrote on tablets of stone, for the Jewish people of old. The laws of righteous living can be numbered in a category of ten fundamental principles. Ten principles which are instinctive in every human heart.

Throughout all the civilized world today they are known, recognized and revered. Three of them pertain to our relationship to Almighty God, these are:

- I. I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.
- II. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
- III. Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

The other seven pertain to our human conduct with one another. These comprise:

- IV. Honor thy father and thy mother.
- V. Thou shalt not kill.
- VI. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
- VII. Thou shalt not steal.
- VIII. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
- IX. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.
- X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

These laws of life were most beautifully summed up by Christ in His twofold summary: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

In other words, you have been created by Almighty God as human beings. You are created above all other worldly creation as far

as the Heavens are above the earth. You alone have the faculty to reason. To know what is right and wrong. You alone have the faculty of free-will. To choose the good and reject the evil, or to choose the evil and reject the good.

And the moral law is that you choose the former path in life. That in love and gratitude to God, you live up to your God-given birthright. That you live a life worthy of your exalted place in creation. That you live as you should live, in accordance with your state in life. That you live in harmony and peace with your God, your neighbor, and your God-given conscience.

This is the law! The moral law! The law of conscience for each and every human being!

None are exempt! None can escape it!

Certain modern agnostics, pseudo-sociologists tried to foster the idea that this moral law was the result of environment or training. It was a good idea until they tried to prove it. They failed hopelessly. Nothing is farther from the truth. For instance, a young boy in

Central Borneo, who has never even heard of Christianity, hears his mother calling him to come to her. Suppose the boy sullenly answers, "I will not," and deliberately disobeys. Immediately in his conscience comes, "That is wrong. Do not act that way again." Why? It is the law! The moral law. The law of God.

Or in playing with another boy, he loses his temper, grabs a club and hits his playmate. Again, into his conscience comes, "That is wrong. Do not do that again." And it is likewise in every human conscience and with all these other fundamental principles of righteous living.

Why? Because it is the law!

THESE LAWS ARE GOOD!

Now here is a very important point. These laws are in the world and it is good that they are. Thus the physical laws.

For instance, the law of gravity. You throw a rock into the air and it will come down. So, too, with all other bodies. It is a good thing. Otherwise things would be all flying

off into space. Everywhere would be confusion and chaos.

Likewise with the law of motion. Were it not for this law we would not and could not be here at all. For scientists tell us that we are being whirled through space on the revolving earth at the rate of sixteen miles per second. If it were not for the law of motion we could not remain on the earth for a single second. But here we are. The law is good!

So also with the law, "Fire burns." The cold winter comes. But we keep warm. We have our cooked foods and our warm drinks. With boiling water we sterilize utensils and surgical instruments. How do we do all this? We simply place wood or coal on fire and the fire burns. The law is good! Otherwise if we did not freeze to death, then cold, hunger, malnutrition and disease would certainly take a frightful toll in hardships, suffering and death. Life would be an agonizing, endless struggle for existence. But "fire burns." The law is good.

With the human or civil laws it is the same. The laws are good! If we did not have them

we could have no peace of mind. Security would be unknown. Fear would be in every heart and home. Might would make right. The strong could oppress and persecute the weak with impunity. Peace and happiness and laughter would disappear from the face of the earth. A man would not dare to leave his wife or children alone for a single instant. Every man, every woman, every home would be at the mercy of the cheaper elements of society. The dregs of society would rule the world.

But we do have these civil laws. And thus we have peace, security and laughter. A man leaves his home for the day without a fear for the safety of those he loves. He feels safe in leaving his home, his wife and children for weeks at a time, if it becomes necessary. And why does he have this feeling of safety and security? It is because he knows they are protected by the law of the land. It is good to have these laws. The laws are good.

Thus the physical laws are good. The civil laws are good.

But above all else, the moral laws are good.

For remember this! God is no tyrant. He does not promulgate a law because of some whim or fancy. Our God is a God of infinite Wisdom, Love, Intelligence and Goodness.

It is not wrong to break the Commandments because God said, "Thou shalt not" do this or "Thou shalt" do this. But God gave these Commandments, because they were the right thing to do in the first place. Thus it is not wrong to kill, because God said: "Thou shalt not kill." But God said: "Thou shalt not kill" because murder is essentially wrong in itself. It is not wrong to take a man's possessions because God has commanded, "Thou shalt not steal." But God said: "Thou shalt not steal" because stealing is wrong anyway.

Thus the physical laws are good. The civil laws, if they are just and right, are good.

While the moral laws because they are the most certain, because they have God's confirmation, are absolutely just and right. They are the best of all laws.

BREAK THE LAW AND IT WILL GET YOU

And here is a very important step in regard to these laws.

Because these laws are good, if you break them you will be punished.

You cannot trifle with nature. If you break a physical law, you know what will happen. The law will get you! For example; take the law of gravity. You go up to the top of a tall building, go to the edge of the roof, and step off into space. What happens? You break the law of gravity. And you go plunging to your death. You have broken the law. The law will get you.

Or take the law of motion. Suppose you are riding on some train, automobile, or car. You are speeding along at sixty or seventy miles an hour. You suddenly decide that you will step out. What happens? You break the law of motion. If you do not pay for your folly by death, at least in broken bones, bruises, pain and sufferings you will realize what you have done. You have broken the law. The law will get you.

Fire burns. It is the law. It is a good law. If you break this law by thrusting your hand into the fire, the punishment is inevitable. The law will get you.

And is it not the same way with the civil laws? Break these laws of the State and as far as humanly possible the State will see that you receive the punishment due.

That is why throughout our country, even though it is the best country on earth, you will find great buildings, of stone or brick, with strong steel bars on every window. Surrounded by high walls. Patrolled by armed guards and machine guns. And within the buildings, great steel cages, tier on tier, and in these cages men locked up as wild beasts. And why all this? Because they have broken the civil laws of the State. Break the law and you will be punished. The law will get you!

It is a sad commentary on human nature that men will not learn the foolishness of all this. Surely the State does its utmost in trying to deter men from breaking the law. They have even devised slogans such as: "There is no perfect crime," or "Crime doesn't pay," or

"The lawbreaker is a fool." Even in motion pictures and comic strips, the State tries to reach out to persuade men, and especially the young man, that the forces of law must always eventually triumph.

For this purpose thousands of dollars are spent yearly in the education of crime detection experts. All the forces of modern science are procured and utilized. Millions of dollars are spent without stint in apprehending even the perpetrators of petty crimes. As far as humanly possible, when the law of the State is broken, the lawbreaker is apprehended and punished. If you break the law, the law will get you!

But here we come to a strange fact.

Think about it deeply.

It is soul-shaking in its significance.

You can break the moral law. The law of God. The best of all laws. The most certain of all laws. And not get punished . . . now!

But you may say, oftentimes a man does get punished. For instance, a man steals a sum of money. But soon he is caught, and goes to jail. That is true. But it is not be-

cause he has broken the moral law. It is because in this case the civil law happens to coincide with the moral law. The man goes to jail because he has broken the civil law.

Or you may say, for instance: A man who lives a life of debauchery, drunkenness and impurity destroys his health, and is punished with disease and sickness. That is true also. But what is the law that is taking its toll in this case? It is the physical law. The law of hygiene. The law of chemical reactions. The law of health and disease. Here again it is that in this instance the physical law is coinciding with the moral law. And the punishment comes from the physical lawbreaking. But the moral law? You may arise in the morning and a thousand times during the day you may break the moral law and not be punished . . . now. There may be no penalty whatsoever attached . . . at least, not here and now.

As a matter of fact, the evil and the wicked may prosper. A man who is not too concerned with the keeping of the Ten Commandments may grow wealthy, where a man who does live up to his conscience, will not.

It would be a waste of time to give examples. All of us know case after case. And if we did not, the morning paper would soon enlighten us. For hundreds of men have accumulated fortunes by trafficking in vilest wickedness. Pandering to lowest passions of men. Despoiling the widow and the orphan. Escaping the civil law by keeping just within its bounds, but ruthlessly and deliberately breaking the moral law, the laws of all decency, the laws of God. Look at it as you will, that is how it is. The wicked do prosper. Live in wealthy homes. With the gratification of every desire. Denying themselves no pleasure, sinful or otherwise. With countless servants to wait on them. Eating only the choicest of food. Drinking expensive wines. And if the moral law, the law of God interferes, or seems to interfere with their life of indolence, luxury and ease, there is no hesitation whatever in tramping it underfoot. The moral law is the one law they hold in contempt. Whether in lying and perjury, in breaking the Sabbath, in adultery, in stealing, in taking the life of the unborn child, or in blaspheming God in drunken frenzy.

While on the other hand, we all know of cases without number, of good, decent-living God-fearing men and women, who because of faithfulness to God's Commandments have lived and died in direst poverty and want.

These things you have seen with your own eyes. They are common knowledge. You have even spoken of them, time and time again. What then does this all mean? Can God be mocked and derided with impunity? Can God, and His laws, be ridden over roughshod in contempt and derision?

To sum up briefly.

In this world of ours there are physical laws. They are good in themselves. They are good for us. If we break a physical law, we are punished. It is inevitable!

In this world of ours, we also have human laws. The civil law or the law of the State. These laws are good in themselves.. They are good for us. If we break one of these human laws, so far as it is humanly possible, we are punished.

But in this world of ours, we also have the moral law. The law of conscience. The law of God. It is the surest of all laws, the best

of all laws, the wisest and most just of all laws. God Himself confirms, these laws are good in themselves and good for us. But here is the point. We can break these best, most certain, and most wise of all laws, and there is no punishment . . . now. We can break them a thousand times a day, in the most despicable, contemptuous, and flagrant manner and there is no penalty . . . now. It is possible to go through life, right up to the moment of death, breaking these moral laws, flaunting God and conscience, and nothing happens. No punishment here whatsoever. Now then, what is the answer?

Your God-given intelligence, reason and common sense has only one answer to make. If there is no penalty here, then there must be a penalty in the world to come. If there is no punishment in this world, then there must be inevitably a punishment in the world to come. If men definitely, absolutely, contemptuously reject God in this world, God will not force Himself upon them after death. And an eternity without God is Hell. Thus your God-given reason, common sense and intelligence.

THERE CAN BE NO OTHER ANSWER!

THE CONFIRMATION OF HOLY WRIT!

And this is the answer that Almighty God confirms through the lips of Christ in Holy Scripture.

For nineteen hundred years ago, in the fullness of time, Almighty God sent to mankind the Promised Redeemer. By the exact fulfillment of the Prophecies, by the working of innumerable miracles which only God could work, by His own Resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ proved beyond all question or reasonable doubt that He was the Son of God. The Messiah Whom the Almighty Father had sent into the world to bring to men the truths of life, death, and eternity. The truths which the Infinite God of Truth would have men believe. And directing how men should live in accordance with these truths.

Now then, what does Christ say about Hell, the penalty of breaking the Moral law of God, the eternal punishment of sin?

These are His own words.

If you wish, you can check on them in St. Luke's Gospel, sixteenth chapter, nineteenth verse.

Christ tells, in this Gospel, about a man named Dives. A very wealthy man evidently. It seems he had a very delightful and impressive palace. Furthermore he seems to have gone in for really luxurious living. He was clothed in purple and fine linen. Sumptuous banquets were a daily occurrence, with the gluttony and debauchery that such implies.

But at the outer gate of this glorious palace, groveling in the dirt and dust was a poor beggar named Lazarus. Not a very nice sight, it would seem, as he was covered with sores, sick and weak and all that. Not a very pleasing specimen of humanity although it probably was not his fault. He tried to make the best of a bad situation and tried to keep alive by picking up the crumbs that fell from the banquet table. Notice, if you will, that Christ tells us that no one did give him, he got only the few that he could get himself. He was treated rather badly, as the unfortunate usually are. And so life went on, until one day

it seems he died of starvation. He was far better off. Not that all the dead are better off. Not at all. But Lazarus was, because he had kept God's laws and had saved his soul. And his soul was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. There his soul entered into that joy and happiness that God has prepared for them that love Him. Such as eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it even entered into the heart of man to conceive.

And so time passed, as time does pass, until the day came when Dives, the rich man also died. For death is no respecter of persons.

But as far as he was concerned it was a shame. He had everything for which to live. He had wealth. Luxury. Influence. The love of life. The satisfaction of all his passions, although he probably became disgusted with himself at times. All men living such lives as his, usually do. But anyway, one day death came for him.

Of course, there must have been a splendid funeral. No doubt quite in keeping with his position in life. With all his banquet friends present. Saying the proper words, doing the

proper things. And as is also quite proper at such times, probably no one really cared very much. Then there were the hired mourners walking along as was the custom in those days. And so they buried his remains. And as they turned away from the grave, already they began to forget him. For such is life among the living . . . for the dead. Dust returneth to dust. But why worry about his body? Where was his soul? Was it saved or lost?

That is the one thing that matters!

But Christ said . . . his soul "Was buried in Hell."

In this world he had broken God's Commandments by willful, deliberate, serious sins. He had spurned God's graces. He had despised his glorious heritage and rejected it by these sins. He had given up his divine birth-right for a mess of pottage. And as he lived, so had he died.

He had broken the law of God. The Moral law. And the punishment was not here—but in the hereafter . . . Hell!

Now then what kind of a place is this Hell?

Hell is an everpresent danger in our lives. For Death is the one certainty in life. Death must inevitably come to every human being. And usually comes suddenly and unexpectedly. So what does Christ, the God of Infinite Truth, tell us about Hell? What was the condition of Dives in Hell?

And Christ said that Dives: "Lifting up his eyes when he was in torments, he saw . . . afar off . . . Lazarus," in Abraham's bosom. And he begged of Almighty God that Lazarus be sent to him that "he may dip the tip of his finger in water, to cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." Notice if you will, "for I am tormented in this flame." Remember they are the words of Christ. It is Christ Who says this. Christ the Living Son of the Living God. The God of Infinite Truth.

There you have it from God Himself. And remember also that Christ was not angry. He was not swayed by His emotions. There was a complete absence of hatred, dislike, or any other of those defects which can, and do, mar human testimony. He was simply stating a

fact. Telling mankind the eternal truths of the world beyond the grave.

Furthermore, He calmly, quietly, but none the less emphatically tells us that Hell is a "place of torments." Where men are punished for the breaking of the law, the Moral law, this law of God. And one of these punishments is that souls are "tormented in flame."

His words only confirm our God-given reason, common sense and intelligence. If we break this Law of God, while we may escape the penalty here and now for awhile, yet eventually the justice of God must be satisfied. For God is not mocked. And whatsoever a man sows, that also shall he reap.

Nor was this all. At another time and another occasion Christ spoke just as plainly concerning Hell and the punishments of Hell. He was describing the Last Day and the General Judgment. You may read this in St. Matthew's Gospel, twenty-fifth chapter, thirty-first verse. He tells how all nations shall be gathered together, and all men be separated into the good and evil. That Almighty God shall

then say to the wicked: "Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire."

They had spurned Him in life. They had died in their rejection of God and His Commandments. There is nothing else left. And so they must depart.

Depart? But where?

Mark well His words: "Into everlasting fire."

Remember here again. These are the words of Jesus Christ! He, Whom His Father, the Almighty God of Infinite Truth, had sent into the world to bring to mankind the truths of life, death and eternity. He, of Whom God said: "This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him."

Notice also if you will, in these words of Christ, there is found the answer to that question often asked, at least mentally, by those men and women who think often and deeply on God's love for men. That is: "How can a good God send men into everlasting fire?" This is the answer. Perhaps not too consoling to the wicked who picture the love of God as the love of a sentimental, maudlin mother who

loves her wayward child not wisely but too well.

But it is real, the true answer!

God cannot, and does not, send a single soul into the everlasting fire.

It is the sinner who sends himself.

This is the way it works out.

In regard to the Moral law, the Law of God, or the Ten Commandments; call them what you will, the things that Almighty God forbids are essentially wrong. So, too, with the things that God insists that we do, they are essentially right and we should do them. They are the thoughts, words, and actions, that are essentially required from us as human beings created by the eternal Creator.

Furthermore, there is not, and there never can be, any compromise between God and evil.

Thus we are either with God, or we are against Him. For God Himself states emphatically and plainly: "If any man love Me, he will keep My Commandments." Hence there are no ifs nor ands. No pros nor cons. No argument. No subterfuge. No evasion. The decision must be clear-cut and definite.

If we will not keep His Commandments, then what?

Again God speaks. Speaks only too plainly. "Amen, Amen, I say unto you that whosoever committeth sin is a servant of Satan."

There is your choice. The choice that every man, woman, and child who comes into this world as a thinking, choosing, human being must make of his own accord. You must take your stand one way or the other. There is no middle ground. With all your minds, hearts and strength you must be the loving children of the Eternal Father. Or by deliberate, willful, serious sins you become the servants of the devil.

See then how these words of Christ irrevocably bring out this truth. As when He declares that when God condemns the wicked and commands: "Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire," He does not say, "prepared for you."

No! Not at all!

But: "Prepared for the devil and his angels." Those that have served Satan! You spurned God in life. You mocked His Command-

ments, His Moral law, in life. You rejected God and turned from Him to become a servant of Satan. You have your God-given intelligence, reason and free-will. You can make your own choice. God simply says: "So be it . . . for eternity." "Depart ye accursed into the everlasting fire prepared for Satan and those who have served him."

Thus it is the sinner who sends himself to Hell. The sinner spurns God. The sinner deliberately chooses to sin and serve Satan. He willfully turns from God and His Commandments. Turns from God to serve Satan and the things of evil. And hence as Christ concludes: "these shall go into everlasting punishment."

Only too true it is, that while there is life, Almighty God will go to any length, to save the sinner. Going as it were, to the very brink of Hell itself, to try to save him. But the sinner has his free will! He must make his own choice!

And that is one of the greatest punishments of Hell for the condemned, the realization that they are there through their own free will.

That it is not God, but the sinner who has condemned himself.

There stands the Law! The Moral law!
This Law of God.

You can keep it or you can break it. But if you persist in breaking it, you must pay the penalty.

Break the law and it will break you!

It is as simple as two and two make four.

Your reason, intelligence and common sense can tell you nothing differently. God's own words confirm its truth.

A truth unquestionable, unescapable, beyond all controversy.

Overwhelming in what it means to you in this life . . . and in the life to come.

You do not like to believe in Hell.

Neither do I!

And I know of no one who is in love with even the idea of Hell.

But the fact is, that Hell does exist.

Your reason, common sense, and intelligence point out this fact to you.

The Word of God confirms its existence, and describes what it is.

I know full well that logic never converted anyone from sin.

Nor have arguments from facts ever made for the living of a good life.

But the knowledge of facts makes for the beginning of Wisdom. And Wisdom is the absence of foolishness and folly.

And only a fool would take a chance with eternity!

For in the last and final analysis eternity means either—Heaven or Hell.

Heaven—"Where eye has not seen
Nor ear heard,
Nor has it entered into the heart
of man,
What things God has prepared
for them that love Him."

Hell—"A place of torment."
"Everlasting fire."

Life is short. The longest life is too short to really matter. And after life, then Death.

Death!

Judgment!

Heaven or Hell!

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